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university of dayton

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DAYTON, Ohio, September 4, 1974 --- Soichi Kawazoe, Executive Vice President of Nissan Motors Corporation in the USA (the makers of Datsun) and a 1930 graduate of the University of Dayton, will be in Dayton Thursday, September 5 to present UD President Raymond A. Roesch, S.M. the keys to a new Datsun automobile.

This will be the third time that alumnus Mr. Kawazoe, a native of Japan, has presented a Datsun to the University. Mr. Kawazoe returned to Dayton in 1970 on the 40th anniversary of his graduation. "I owe a lot to the University. I had a lot of friends here," he commented at the first presentation. A Datsun 240Z was presented to UD in 1972.

Soichi Kawazoe came to the United States from Japan in 1926 to study mechanical engineering at the University of Dayton. Now Kawazoe, 66, is Executive Vice President of Nissan Motor Corporation in the USA with headquarters in Palisades, New Jersey. He is responsible for operations of the Japanese automaker in 26 states on the Eastern Seaboard.

After receiving his Bachelor's degree at UD, he went on to Massachusetts Institute of Technology and completed his master's degree in engineering before returning to Japan in 1931.

While he was in Japan he served three years in Manchuria in the Japanese army, opened a plant in Manchuria for Nissan in 1940, was prisoner of the Chinese Communists for eight years and served as chief engineer for their arsenal. He was repatriated in 1955.

Once as a prisoner he attempted an escape, but was recaptured, court-martialed by the Chinese, sentenced to death, and then granted a last minute reprieve.

In 1970 during the first Datsun presentation to the University, he estimated that Nissan Motors would sell 130,000 Datsuns in the US that year and predicted that in 1974 the aim was 300,000 cars.

Preparing the Datsun in Dayton to be presented to the University is Autohaus, the local distributor, owned by Lou Gregg.